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OVERCOMING THE SIBLING RIVALRY

Enhancing Department of Defense Capability to Conduct

Joint Expeditionary Warfare

by

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Biography

Lieutenant Colonel Cabaniss was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps on 30 May 1990. He has served in command or staff positions at every level within the Marine Division as well as positions on a Marine Air Ground Task Force staff. In addition, he has served in joint billets at The White House and the Combined Forces Command/Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan. Most recently, he commanded the 2d Battalion, 8th Marines. During his tenure, the command conducted counterinsurgency operations in Helmand Province, Afghanistan.   A graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy with a B.S. in History, he also has a Masters of Military Studies from the U.S. Marine Corps Command & Staff College.

Introduction

Simply stated, joint doctrine drives best at the combatant commander level because the Geographic Combatant Commander (GCC) is in a position to drive the method of both the organization and the employment for the joint force. By perusing the available literature, it is evident that the most effective examples of joint integration occurred when the GCC exercised the role as the Joint Force Commander (JFC). Although not always smooth, Operation DESERT STORM and the early stages of Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM are replete with examples of effective integration of the joint force across the joint functions in combat. In these cases, the GCC was able to personally ensure the integration of his service and functional components through collaborative planning between the staffs of the Combatant Command and the service somponents. Even with execution by the service components, integration remained high as long as operations were centrally managed around the GCC and his service component commanders. Joint Publication (JP) 1-02 defines integrations as "the arrangement of military forces and their actions to create a force that operates by engaging as a whole."[1] The critical link in this process of integration is the collaboration of planners from across the joint functions. Unfortunately, history shows that this synergy can begin to break down once major combat operations (MCO) have been completed and joint expeditionary warfare becomes focused at the sub-theater level such as the case in counterinsurgency operations.

This paper will set forward the argument that with greater integration between the services, at and beyond the rank of Major and Lieutenant Commander, through a dedicated inter-service exchange program, it will be possible to create a highly qualified pool of Joint officers to lead

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[1] JP 1-02, page 230

expeditionary warfare in the next generation. The initial portion of the paper is designed to facilitate gaining a greater understanding of the challenges that the Department of Defense (DOD) faces in attempting to achieve greater integration of the services. The final portion of the paper will answer the question of what DOD should do about it?

Background

Many would argue that the armed services are members of a dysfunctional family that is constantly competing with itself for dominance. Others would argue that the progress toward greater joint integration has been smooth. In reality, rivalry is a natural part of the relationship of the services. To pretend DOD or another joint organization can make it go away with the stroke of a pen is to misunderstand nature of the relationship. As individual services and as members of the joint force, the services are constantly shaping the joint environment and being shaped by it. The armed forces have been extremely successful in achieving many of the objectives set forth by the political leaders of our nation; however, both individually and collectively, the armed services must remember that success is relative. To be successful, the joint force does not have to be the best, just better than its adversaries. Since the 1980s many efforts have been made to improve the jointness of the armed forces with varying levels of success. The most prevailing and influential was the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986. The U.S. military's ability to conduct joint operations has improved since Goldwater-Nichols was signed although many have argued that this attempt at improvement has failed to remove some of the most important impediments to increasing jointness.[2]

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[2] Lt Col Erik W. Hansen, USAF, *Goldwater-Nichols – Failing to Go the Distance.* Page 15

Goldwater-Nichols and Joint Doctrine

This study will not attempt to define all facets of Joint Doctrine and other Joint directives nor completely address the Goldwater-Nichols Act. Many detailed works have been completed on these subjects. Rather, the study's intent is to demonstrate how both have the ability to generate tensions with the potential to inhibit better integration of joint forces in expeditionary operations.

Goldwater-Nichols attempted to fundamentally alter the relationship between the services and DOD. The law was intended to enhance the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff's (CJCS) role in providing military advice to the political leadership, but it has been less successful in forcing joint integration. One of the main efforts of the act was to improve the jointness of the armed services. According to Dr. Richard Meinhart, the final phase of the process toward jointness is the interdependence of the services.[3] Interdependence is defined as the services being dependent on each other for shared capability.[4] With respect to joint integration, the major result of the act was the clarification of the roles of the GCCs and the CJCS. Although the law created the opportunity for greater integration of the services, "jointness cannot reshape the fact that the services are the primary suppliers of their particular force specializations."[5]

Founded on war fighting theory and practical experience, joint operations doctrine seeks to provide the necessary guidance for JFCs to defeat adversaries.[6] In reality, Joint publications both help and hinder joint integration. As stated by General "Speedy" Martin[7], "joint vice service doctrine drives joint operations."[8] Service considerations permeate joint doctrine. For good or

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[3] Quoted in Lt Col Erik W. Hansen, *Goldwater-Nichols – Failing to Go the Distance*, page 2
[4] Lt Col Erik W. Hansen, *Goldwater-Nichols – Failing to Go the Distance*, page 2
[5] David S Sorenson, *The Process and Politics of Defense Acquisition*. Page 50
[6] JP 3-0 page II-1
[7] General Gregory S. Martin, USAF (Retired) Former Commander, Air Force Material Command and Former Commander, US Air Forces in Europe
[8] General Martin's discussion with Air War College Grad Strategy Program on 10 December 2010

ill, joint doctrine is focused at the level of the Joint Force Commander. According to JP 3-0 *Operations,* "Combatant Commanders are the vital link between those who determine national security policy and strategy and the military forces or subordinate JFCs that conduct military operations."[9]

The basic tension in joint doctrine occurs within JP 3-0 and its subordinate publications. Chapter III clearly defines that joint functions – Command and Control, Intelligence, Fires, Movement and Maneuver, Sustainment and Protection – help the JFC integrate, synchronize and direct operations.[10] However, JP 3-30 *Command and Control for Joint Air Operations* states:

> While JFCs have full authority, within establishing directives, to assign missions, redirect efforts, and direct coordination among subordinate commanders, they should allow Service tactical and operational groupings to generally function as they were designed. The intent is to meet the needs of the JFC while maintaining the tactical and operational integrity of the Service organizations.[11]

JP 3-*31Command and Control for Joint Land Operations* has comments similar to JP 3-30. Not limited to joint publications, the CJCS's *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations* also demonstrates the tension. "Major war against another military power or group of powers presents the greatest potential threat to national security, but is less likely in the time frame of this concept than other forms of conflict."[12] The next paragraph goes onto state,

> The United States must maintain its competency in large-scale conventional warfare even while it prepares for and conducts less conventional operations. And since capabilities optimized for either of these requirements may be ill-suited to the other, trade off decisions are inescapable. Ultimately, U.S. military forces must be able to operate across the full range of potential conflicts.[13]

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[9] JP 3-0, page I-3
[10] JP 3-0, page III-1.
[11] JP 3-30 page I-2
[12] *Concept for Joint Operations*, page 9
[13] *Concept for Joint Operations* page 9

While I have used only a few examples, it is clear that joint doctrine appears to invite the Combatant Commanders, or their appointed JFCs, to compete with their service component commanders for the right to organize the force as well as what manner these forces may operate. According to Colonel Charles Q. Brown, USAF, "the disparate and stove-piped processes in joint doctrine are not conducive to effective integration."[14]

Allison and Zelikow define three different decision making models in their work *Essence of Decision*. These models are the Rational Actor Model, Organizational Behavior and the Government Politics Model.[15] The Government Politics Model is most fitting to this tension between joint and service organizations. This model defines policy as the result of bargaining between players.[16] Taking this into consideration, joint doctrine can be understood as a resultant rather than a decision. Instead of selecting the best option, the Joint Staff and the services have selected the option that could gain the greatest consensus amongst them.

Does the Current Default Setting Work?

In many expeditionary environments, especially the later stages of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM and the current phase of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, the GCC has become removed from the majority of the daily planning and execution. In both cases, the planning and execution efforts for later stages of the operation are at the sub-theater level and in some cases below the level of the JFCs assigned within specific Joint Operating Areas. In these cases where ground operations have devolved to subordinate commands within service components, the ability of the GCC to create synergy between his staff and the components, especially between ground forces and aviation, has become greatly diminished.

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[14] Col Charles Q. Brown,. *Developing Doctrine for the Future Joint Force*, page 1-2
[15] Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*, page 7
[16] Allison and Zelikow, Essence of Decision, page 6

The fundamental difference is especially evident in the way that air and ground commanders approach planning. Airmen believe in centralized planning at the operational level, and ground commanders believe it decentralized planning at the tactical level, especially in irregular warfare.[17]

In these cases, the service components organizational solution can intensify the breakdown. For the Air Force, this deficiency in the command and control of airpower operations was identified in 2003 and as a result the Air Component Coordination Element (ACCE) was created.[18] While this change has proven beneficial, it is not the end of the process. According to Lt Gen Phillip Breedlove and Major Brian Tyler, "it is already time for another healthy and introspective conversation on the future C2 of air, space, and cyber power."[19]

The explanation above, the basic current default setting for joint operations, could be referred to as the current joint paradigm. Although Thomas Kuhn was writing about scientific revolutions, his ideas on paradigms and innovation have great applicability to the military. A paradigm can be defined as universally recognized achievements that model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners.[20] Although it has some negative connotations, a community of practice, such as military professionals, must have a paradigm if it is to operate effectively. In the absence of a paradigm, all the facts of a given situation could seemingly have equal relevancy.[21] The services cannot throw joint doctrine out of the window because they must have a framework to approach joint operations. However, the joint force is an organization in the midst of a crisis according to Kuhn's model. He defines a crisis as the state in which the failure of existing rules and the associated insecurity the failure generates serves as a prelude to

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[17] Lt Col Clint Hinote, *Centralized Control and Decentralized Execution – A Catch Phrase in Crisis*. page 35

[18] Lt Gen Mike Hostage, "A Seat at the Table," *Air and Space Power Journal*, page 19

[19] Lt Gen Phillip Breedlove, USAF and Major Brian Taylor, USAF, "Reenabling Air Force Command and Control for 21st Century Parnterships, " Air and Space Power Journal, page 15

[20] Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, page x

[21] Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, page 15

the search for new ones.[22] However, this statement must be qualified. The current joint

paradigm has proven to be successful, but not universally so. The current setting approaches

joint operations with the 'one size fits all' approach. However, the services' expectations of

current joint doctrine and organizations are far above its ability to deliver. Doctrine and

organizations should provide a framework to approach operations and nothing more. If doctrine

had all the answers, military organizations would not find it necessary to have commanders and

staffs to provide direction. "War is too varied an activity for a single set of professional

norms."[23]

Challenges to Finding a Solution

There are multiple challenges associated with finding a solution to the joint force's

organizational "crisis." First among these challenges is that the services all view the problem

through their own organizational prism. One example is the term "command and control".

Many lump these words together even though they mean different things to soldiers, sailors,

Marines and airmen.[24] This organizational prism can be broken down into several components.

Everyone is very aware of the concept of service culture, but it means different things to

different people. While most military professionals are unsure of the level at which service

culture's impact, many believe it is significant especially when speaking of other services.

Organizational culture can be defined as the force that shapes behavior within an organization in

ways that conform both with formal and informal norms.[25] While each service may be viewing

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[22] Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, page 68
[23] Elliot A. Cohen, *Supreme Command*, page 263
[24] Air Commodore Stuart Peach, "The Airman's Dilemma to Command or Control", *Air Power 21,* page 123
[25] Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*, page 145

the same problem, they are viewing it from their own unique perspective. In a more negative

light, "culture is a residual variable that explains behavior when all other explanations fail."[26]

   Another aspect of this organizational prism is driven by the specific roles and missions

assigned to each service. It is from these roles and missions that each service develops its

capabilities. Because of its nature, each service will view every situation from the perspective of

its possible role in the solution. In other words, each service hopes to have a ready-made

solution for any problem that could possibly arise. The down side of this multi-service

resolution process is that it is impossible for each service to have a complete solution to every

problem. As every service has many unique capabilities to offer, the joint force potentially can

lose significant synergy by ignoring any one of the services.

> An organization is a collection of choices looking for problems, issues and
> feelings looking for decision situations in which they might be aired, solutions
> looking for issues to which they might be the answer, and decision makers
> looking for work… [27]

   Each of the services utilizes a lessons learned system to improve the performance of their

organization. There are many challenges associated with lessons learned. First, just because

something has been identified does not necessarily mean it has been learned. History is replete

with examples of operational lessons that have been lost over the course of time only to be

relearned in the heat of combat. For an identified lesson to be learned, it must permeate the

organization at every level and be rectified.   In reality, the greatest challenge with the process is

the actual lessons that were learned by the participating services. In one sense, the services are

programmed to learn only those lessons they want to learn. The services and the individuals that

identify the lessons have a "natural tendency to look for instances that confirm their vision of the

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[26] Gal Luft. *Beer, Bacon and Bullets – Culture in Coalition Warfare From Gallipoli to Iraq*, page XIII
[27] Stephen D. Krausner, "The Garbage Can Theory . *Avoiding Trivia*. Page 161

world, corroborate their theories and then treat them as evidence."[28] Cognitive scientists have

referred to this as the confirmation bias.[29] To say it in perhaps a more straightforward manner, a

quote by former Secretary of State Dean Rusk from a comment of the manuscript of *Thinking in*

Time is appropriate.

> I have the impression that you at times…began with your own conclusions as to what
> ought to have been done on certain problems and then constructed your argument to
> come out at that point. If I mention this, it is simply to remind you that you are human
> beings like the rest of us.[30]

The final challenge is the implementation of change itself. Senior decision makers tend to

assume that if they can "assure political consensus, they could invent, improvise or force the

requisite responses from the men who do the work."[31] Not simply overcoming organizational

inertia, change can have negative impacts. Damaging interactions can occur when new,

unfamiliar tasks are superimposed on new routines.[32] This is not to say that the services and

joint organizations should not pursue change; rather, they should be cautious before

implementing anything radical. According to Williamson Murray,

> Most innovation, however, suggests a long, complex process involving organizational
> cultures, strategic requirements, the international situation, and the capacity to learn
> realistic, honest lessons from past as well as present military experience.[33]

Recommendations for Achieving Greater Joint Integration in Expeditionary Operations

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[28] Nassim N. Taleb, *The Black Swan*, page 55

[29] Taleb, *Black Swan*, Page 55

[30] Richard Neustadt and Ernest R. May, *Thinking in Time*, page xvi.

[31] Neustadt and May, *Thinking In Time*, page xx

[32] Allison and Zelikow , *Essence of Decision*, page 158

[33] Williams Murray, "Innovation: Past and Future", *Military Innovation in the Interwar Period*, Page 308

The initial portion of the paper was designed to facilitate gaining a greater understanding of the challenges that DOD faces in attempting to achieve greater integration of the services. The next question is what does DOD do, if anything, about it?

Although there are references to the applicability of joint doctrine to all types of conflict, this is simply not the case. If doctrine is a resultant, then consensus, not the best option, drove DOD choices. If the nature of every conflict is different, then DOD and the services should understand that every contingency operation develops from its own particular set of circumstances requiring a tailored, perhaps unique, solution involving multiple services. In order to meet this requirement, DOD must have flexible, adaptive organizations. The larger question is how to build these organizations without sacrificing the service core competencies and ethos that enable mission success. The first step in organizing for expeditionary operations is a clear understanding of the character of the operation. It is critical that DOD and the services do not "commit the strategic sin that Napoleon once described as 'making pictures' of the world as one wishes it to be, rather than as it is."[34] DOD and the services must recognize the inherent dangers in clinging to organizational and individual blinders and work to overcome them.

Doctrine

Currently, joint doctrine drives most when not confronted with actual operations. As stated earlier, the foundation of doctrine is war fighting theory and practical experience. By its very nature, doctrine is always trying to catch up with real world experience. At the end of every operation, the services and the joint staff should be evaluating the strength of their doctrine and how current experience is impacting it. That said, the services, as organizations made up of human beings, are wired to see things as they expect them or want them to be. Instead of

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[34] Cohen, *Supreme Command*, page 23

wrestling with this dichotomy, the services should accept it. One size does not have to fit all. If doctrine had to be adjusted for every event, it would grow so large and unwieldy to be useless. Based on numerous studies, joint doctrine has enabled success. The word "enabled" is critical. DOD and the services should not confuse enabling with directing. Where it has enabled success, doctrine has assisted in creating a framework for commanders and staffs to use in framing the problem as well as the organization necessary to implement the military ways to achieve the political ends. According to Lt Gen Hurd[35], doctrine provides us with overarching concepts.[36] As stated in joint doctrine, the character of each and every conflict will be different; therefore, neither joint organizations nor the services should attempt to make doctrine more than what it is, an enabler. Future efforts at improving joint doctrine should focus on small incremental changes vice large "transformational" changes.

Organization

While DOD is drawn to building more joint organizations to create synergy, joint does not necessarily mean better. Core competency resides with the service components.[37] Ultimately, DOD does not need to create new organizations in order to achieve greater unity of effort in expeditionary operations. What it does need are subordinate organizations that are better able to collaboratively plan across the joint functions as well as understand what echelon of command they occupy. For the purposes of this paper, echelon of command is defined as the level of direction a command has over the conduct of operations. Does the organization plan and execute day to day operations or is it more focused on refining the campaign plan? It is through this understanding that the organization will better be able to focus on its planning duties. Effective

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[35] Lieutenant General Joseph E. Hurd, USAF (Ret), former J-3, US Central Command and Former Deputy Command, US Forces Korea, remarks to AWC Air Command and Control Elective.
[36] Lt Gen Joseph E. Hurd remarks to AWC Air Command and Control Elective.
[37] Lt Gen Hurd remarks to AWC Air Command and Control Elective Class (date)

planning across the joint functions gives the joint force the best opportunity to integrate, synchronize and drive operations.

Each and every component of the joint force regardless of service contributes to all functions; therefore, each component involved in the operation must be involved in planning regardless of where the planning occurs. It is critical that future joint organizations facilitate this process. The challenge to this effort occurs when planning and execution is conducted well below the level of the Combatant Commander and at varying levels within the service components as is the case in most irregular warfare style expeditionary operations. Frequently, the availability of embedded sister service planners is extremely limited if they are not already a member of the organization's planning staff. Due to the challenges of implementing "transformational change" within each service, it is only through improvement of existing organizations that DOD and the services can improve the process.

Training

Each military service speaks ad nausem of how their pre-deployment training enabled operational success. DOD and the services understand that training is critical to effective integration and interoperability. If this is so, why is it such a challenge to create joint training opportunities? In reality, joint training occurs most regularly at the tactical level. Most of this training occurs well below the combatant commander or service component headquarters level. In many cases, units at the tactical level are training together utilizing training events created by Joint Forces Command (JFCOM). Considering just one example, elements of the 2d Battalion, 8th Marines to include the tactical air control party (TACP) were able to participate in multiple

live-fire training events with aircraft from multiple services.[38] These opportunities were created

via the Joint Close Air Support community of practice. The deployment schedules in support of

current operational requirements can be a constraint on the ability to maximize these

opportunities. The greater challenge is to create similar opportunities for higher level staffs. If

planning across the joint functions is the critical task, it deserves the same level of training effort

as do lower level tactical skills. If it is important to exercise terminal control of close air support,

it should be just as important to understand the planning effort that it took to get the aircraft and

the Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC) into their positions.

   It is imperative that senior leaders take on the responsibility of enhancing joint training

opportunities as deployment schedules allow and that joint training events continue after the

current combat operations have ended. Even though JFCOM is being disestablished, joint

training will receive higher priority in the future as responsibility for it will be returned fully to

the CJCS.[39] More effective policy is also a solution to the problem. In this regard, the

codification of the common training requirements across the services as well as coalition partners

for the JTAC and Joint Fires Officer (JFO) by JFCOM is a major step in the right direction.

Although it is not possible to expand this codification to all tasks, there are definite opportunities

to expand this concept to other training tasks.

Leadership, Education and Personnel

   DOD and the services must continue to push to create more joint minded officers. While the

current model for joint education has moved the process in the right direction, it will never

produce the pool of joint minded officers necessary for success across the joint force. Far too

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[38] Authors experience while serving as the Commanding Officer, 2d Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment during pre-deployment training in 2008 -2009 executed in preparation for deployment in support counterinsurgency operations in Helmand Province, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.
[39] CLS Brief to AWC, 6 Jan 2011

many officers attend Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) at their own services schools. Even those who attend sister service schools do not get the full flavor of operating within their sister service. In the end, the JPME process produces a sterilized concept of jointness that has not been enhanced by practical application. As discussed earlier, real jointness comes from the detailed planning associated with execution. It is in the detailed mission planning that true understanding of capabilities and limitations are learned and relationships built. This is the most critical piece of the solution.

Inter-Service Exchange Program

DOD can best improve the availability of joint minded personnel through the mandating of exchange officers between the services. Liaison officers or component coordinating elements are not enough. Unlike a liaison officer, an exchange officer is an integral member of the organization rather than a conduit for the flow of information between commanders. To be clear, these exchange officers will not be filling joint billets, but rather be filling service line numbers within a sister service staff. This effort would create the opportunity for sister service officers to gain the trust and confidence of their peers and seniors alike with potential long term benefits for their parent service. To be effective, small numbers of exchange officers will not meet the requirement. As stated earlier, every service contributes to every joint function. A significant number of exchange officers, perhaps as many as 20 percent of the staff, should be embedded across the Flag and General Officer level operational staffs of each service. Only by exchanging a significant number of personnel from across the functional areas can DOD achieve real integration at levels below the Combatant Commander level. In some cases such as exchange pilots at the squadron level, this has occurred at least on a limited basis. Manning the requirements above will cause some tradeoffs to occur. A one for one exchange of personnel

between services is not an exact swap. While each service will lose some capability by losing some of their officers, they potentially will gain capabilities that can enable greater synergy as members of a joint force. As is the case with most exchange officers, the more capable the officer, the quicker they will adapt to their new environment.

Lastly, the exchange officer tours should not occur prior to an officer being promoted to the grade of 0-4.[40] Completion of JPME prior to assignment should not be considered a disqualifier. What these officers should bring with them is a detailed understanding of their service capabilities and limitations in their specific functional area. This understanding will create the opportunities for better integration across the services. In addition, these early exchange tours could potentially enhance the JPME process. Instead of learning of their sister services' capabilities from course readings and the relationships developed during the school year, these officers would have developed a much more detailed understanding of their sister service's organizations and the people within it developed over a multi-year tour. Not limited to field grade officers, significant consideration should be given to the assignment of General and Flag Officers in a similar manner. Unfortunately, it is unrealistic to believe every officer would have the opportunity to serve as an exchange officer. That being the case, we could make the completion of an exchange tour a requirement for service as a Flag or General Officer on a joint staff. With this level of commitment to exchange tours, the services will ensure only the best and brightest are assigned to exchange billets. As a result, we will have a highly qualified pool of officers to lead joint expeditionary warfare in the next generation. Additionally, this would

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[40] Author's note. By this point in their career, an officer has gained sufficient credibility in their assigned Military Occupational Specialty (MOS)/Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC). In most cases, the services begin to assign officers of this grade to higher level staff assignments. As a detailed understanding of service capabilities and limitations is an absolute requirement for an exchange tour, the initial MOS/AFSC progression of junior officers should not be disturbed. .

enhance single service headquarters' ability to function more effectively as a framework headquarters for either a Joint Task Force Headquarters or as a service component in response to lower level contingencies.

Conclusion

In order to maximize the opportunity to improve the integration of the joint force, DOD and the services must build from the most positive aspects of the Goldwater-Nichols Act while continuing to enhance areas where they have fallen short. The problem is that the solutions utilized in the past, creation of truly joint organizations, will not significantly improve the integration of the tactical level actions below the combatant command level. The greatest opportunity to create long term change beneficial to joint integration in expeditionary operations is for the services to manage the change themselves. The single change most likely to function as a catalyst for the services is the implementation of an exchange program within the services. As greater numbers of officers with this type of experience move into more senior ranks, the potential barriers to greater joint integration will begin to break down. With this break down, senior leaders using doctrine as a framework, vice dogma, may be more capable and willing to create flexible, adaptable joint organizations tailored to the character of the expeditionary environment of each specific operation.

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